NUMB. CLX.

The SPECTATOR.

—— Omnem quæ nunc obducta tuenti
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, & humida circum
Caligat, nubem eripiam —— Virg.

Saturday, September 1. 1711.

WHEN I was at *Grand Cairo* I picked up several Oriental Manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entituled, *The Visions of Mirza*, which I have read over with great Pleasure. I intend to give it to the Publick when I have no other Entertainment for them; and shall begin with the first Vision, which I have translated Word for Word as follows.

'On the fifth Day of the Moon, which according 'to the Custom of my Fore-fathers I always 'kept holy, after having washed my self and offered up my Morning Devotions, I ascended the high 'Hills of *Bagdat*, in order to pass the rest of the Day 'in Meditation and Prayer. As I was here airing 'my self on the Tops of the Mountains, I fell into a 'profound Contemplation on the Vanity of human Life; and passing from one Thought to another, Surely, said I, Man is but a Shadow and 'Life a Dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast 'my Eyes towards the Summit of a Rock that was 'not far from me, where I discovered one in the 'Habit of a Shepherd, with a little Musical Instrument in his Hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his Lips, and began to play upon it. 'The Sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought 'into a Variety of Tunes that were inexpressibly 'melodious, and altogether different from any thing 'I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those 'heavenly Airs that are played to the departed 'Souls of good Men upon their first Arrival in Paradise, to wear out the Impressions of their last 'Agonies, and qualify them for the Pleasures of that 'happy Place. My Heart melted away in secret 'Raptures.

'I had been often told that the Rock before me 'was the Haunt of a Genius; and that several had 'been entertained with Musick who had passed by 'it, but never heard that the Musician had before 'made himself visible. When he had raised my 'Thoughts, by those transporting Airs which he 'played, to taste the Pleasures of his Conversation, 'as I looked upon him like one astonished, he 'beckoned to me, and by the waving of his Hand 'directed me to approach the Place where he sat. 'I drew near with that Reverence which is due to 'a superiour Nature; and as my Heart was entirely 'subdued by the captivating Strains I had heard, 'I fell down at his Feet and wept. The Genius 'smiled upon me with a Look of Compassion and 'Affability that familiarized him to my Imagination, and at once dispelled all the Fears and Apprehensions with which I approached him. He 'lifted me from the Ground, and taking me by the 'Hand, *Mirzah*, said he, I have heard thee in thy 'Soliloquies, follow me.

'He then led me to the highest Pinnacle of the 'Rock, and placing me on the Top of it, Cast thy 'Eyes Eastward, said he, and tell me what thou 'seest. I see, said I, a huge Valley and a prodigious Tide of Water rolling through it. The Valley that thou seest, said he, is the Vale of Misery; 'and the Tide of Water that thou seest is Part of 'the great Tide of Eternity: What is the Reason, said I, that the Tide I see rises out of a 'thick Mist at one End, and again loses it self 'in a thick Mist at the other? What thou seest, said he, is that Portion of Eternity which 'is called Time, measured out by the Sun, and 'reaching from the Beginning of the World 'to its Consummation. Examine now, said he, 'this Sea that is thus bounded with Darkness at 'both Ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in 'it. I see a Bridge, said I, standing in the Midst 'of the Tide. The Bridge thou seest, said he, is 'humane Life; consider it attentively. Upon a 'more leisurely Survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire Arches, with several broken Arches, which added to those that 'were entire made up the Number about an hundred. As I was counting the Arches, the Genius 'told me, that this Bridge consisted at first of a 'thousand Arches; but that a great Flood swept 'away the rest, and left the Bridge in the ruinous 'Condition I now beheld it. But tell me further, 'said he, what thou discoverest on it. I see Multitudes of People passing over it, said I, and a 'black Cloud hanging on each End of it. As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the Passengers dropping thro' the Bridge, into the great Tide 'that flowed underneath it; and upon further Examination, perceived there were innumerable Trap-doors that lay concealed in the Bridge, which the 'Passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell 'through them into the Tide and immediately

'ly disappeared. These hidden Pit-falls were set 'very thick at the Entrance of the Bridge, so that 'Throngs of People no sooner broke through the 'Cloud, but many of them fell into them. They 'grew thinner towards the Middle, but multiplied 'and lay closer together towards the End of the 'Arches that were entire.

'There were indeed some Persons, but their 'Number was very small, that continued a kind of 'hobbling March on the broken Arches, but fell 'through one after another, being quite tired and 'spent with so long a Walk.

'I passed some Time in the Contemplation of 'this wonderful Structure, and the great Variety 'of Objects which it presented. My Heart was 'filled with a deep Melancholy to see several drop-'ping unexpectedly in the Midst of Mirth and Jol-'lity, and catching at every thing that stood by 'them to save themselves. Some were looking 'up towards the Heavens in a thoughtful Posture, 'and in the Midst of a Speculation stumbled and 'fell out of Sight. Multitudes were very busy in 'the Pursuit of Bubbles that glittered in their Eyes 'and danced before them, but often when they 'thought themselves within the Reach of them 'their Footing failed and down they sunk. In 'this Confusion of Objects, I observed some with 'Scymetars in their Hands, and others with 'Urinals, who ran to and fro upon the Bridge, 'thrusting several Persons on Trap-doors which did 'not seem to have been laid for them, and which 'they might have escaped had they not been thus 'forced upon them.

'The Genius seeing me indulge my self in this 'melancholy Prospect, told me I had dwelt long 'enough upon it: Take thine Eyes off the Bridge, 'said he, and tell me if thou yet seest any thing 'thou dost not comprehend. Upon looking up, 'What mean, said I, those great Flights of Birds 'that are perpetually hovering about the Bridge, 'and settling upon it from Time to Time? I see 'Vultures, Harpyes, Ravens, Cormorants, and a-'mong many other feathered Creatures several lit-'tle winged Boys, that perch in great Numbers up-'on the middle Arches. These, said the Genius, 'are Envy, Avarice, Superstition, Despair, Love, 'with the like Cares and Passions that infest humane 'Life.

'I here fetched a deep Sigh, Alas, said I, Man 'was made in vain! How is he given away to Mi-'sery and Mortality! tortured in Life, and swal-'lowed up in Death! The Genius being moved 'with Compassion towards me, bid me quit so un-'comfortable a Prospect: Look no more, said he, 'on Man in the first Stage of his Existence, in his 'setting out for Eternity; but cast thine Eye on 'that thick Mist into which the Tide bears the se-'veral Generations of Mortals that fall into it. I 'directed my Sight as I was ordered, and (whether 'or no the good Genius strengthned it with any su-'pernatural Force, or dissipated Part of the Mist 'that was before too thick for the Eye to pene-'trate) I saw the Valley opening at the further 'End, and spreading forth into an immense Ocean, 'that had a huge Rock of Adamant running through 'the Midst of it, and dividing it into two equal 'Halfs. The Cloud still rested on one Half of it, 'insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but 'the other appeared to me a vast Ocean planted 'with innumerable Islands, that were covered with 'Fruits and Flowers, and interwoven with a thou-'sand little shining Seas that ran among them. I 'could see Persons dressed in glorious Habits, with 'Garlands upon their Heads, passing among the 'Trees, lying down by the Sides of Fountains, 'or resting on Beds of Flowers; and could hear a 'confused Harmony of singing Birds, falling Wa-'ters, humane Voices, and musical Instrumen. 'Gladness grew in me upon the Discovery of so de-'lightful a Scene. I wished for the Wings of an 'Eagle, that I might fly away to those happy Seats; 'but the Genius told me there was no Passage to 'them, except through the Gates of Death that I saw 'opening every Moment upon the Bridge. The I-'slands, said he, that lie so fresh and green before 'thee, and with which the whole Face of the O-'cean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are 'more in Number than the Sands on the Sea-shore; 'there are Myriads of Islands behind those which 'thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine 'Eye or even thine Imagination can extend it self. 'These are the Mansions of good Men after Death, 'who according to the Degree and Kinds of Vir-'tue in which they excelled, are distributed among 'these several Islands, which abound with Pleasures 'of different Kinds and Degrees, suitable to the 'Relishes and Perfections of those who are settled 'in them; every Island is a Paradise accommoda-'ted to its respective Inhabitants. Are not these, O 'Mirzah, Habitations worth contending for? 'Does Life appear miserable, that gives thee 'Opportunities of earning such a Reward? Is 'Death to be feared, that will convey thee to so hap-'py an Existence? Think not Man was made in 'vain, who has such an Eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible Pleasure on these happy 'Islands. At length said I, Shew me now, I be-'seech thee, the Secrets that lie hid under those 'dark Clouds which cover the Ocean on the other 'Side of the Rock of Adamant. The Genius 'making me no Answer, I turned about to address 'my self to him a second time, but I found that he 'had left me; I then turned again to the Vision 'which I had been so long contemplating, but in-'stead of the rolling Tide, the arched Bridge, and 'the happy Islands, I saw nothing but the long hol-'low Valley of *Bagdat*, with Oxen, Sheep, and 'Camels, grazing upon the Sides of it.

The End of the first Vision of Mirzah.

For SALE by the CANDLE.

On Thursday the 6th of September next, at Gar-raway's Coffee-house in Exchange-Ally in Cornhill, at to before Noon, (only one Cask and Basket in a Lot) the intire Cargoe of a neutral Ship the Emanuel, Biorn Rengson Master, imported from Dieppe, (pursuant to an Act of Parliament made last Session) con-sisting of excellent new French Wines, neat, viz. 44 Feuillettes or half Hogsheads of Burgundy, 4 Baskets containing each 100 Bottles of Champaign, and 66 Hogsheads of true Hermitage, just landed, and now in a Vault near the House of Mr. Tho. Cary, Merchant, in Bu-dolph lane near Billingsgate: The said Wines are to be seen and sold on Tuesday the 4th and Wednesday the 5th of September aforesaid. Note, The Buyers are desired to appear punctually at the time appointed, determining to compleat the Sale without adjourning. To be sold by Tho. Tomkins, Broker.

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